

Members of the Joint Committee on Education:

I am here today as a former teacher, District curriculum administrator and school board member. I am presently the Executive Director of the Connecticut Alliance for Arts Education and on the board of the Connecticut Arts Administrators' Association.

"The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said." Ted Sizer from Brown U wrote two books, *Horace's Compromise* and *Horace's School*. He discussed the teaching of English / LA in our schools. He understands in grades K-8, we need to teach the basics, grammar, etc. BUT, he says in HS we should not have a subject called English. All teachers should be English teachers through their particular subject save for electives such as on Dickens or Shakespeare. He says we have to teach children how to use their minds, how to think, how to process, how to create. He says there should be three basic subject areas: History-Philosophy, Science-Math and the Arts.

For this to happen, we recommend that:

- STEM requirements be increased to 7 (rather than 9);
- Humanities requirements are maintained at their current level of 7 credits;
- Technology-based arts courses such as 'Digital Animation and Graphic Design', 'Digital Music Studio and Composition' be counted as STEM courses; and
- Our new arts graduation requirement be increased to two credits, as was proposed in the Connecticut Department of Education's original draft

In a band, orchestra or chorus, we teach children how to work together. We teach students how to bring fruition to a piece of music. In a visual arts class, we teach children to express themselves with few limitations which is so much harder to do in most non-arts classes. In a theater arts or dance class, we teach children how to get a message or idea across to their audience.

Elliot Eisner, a famous Stanford Arts Professor, wrote "The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of..." what we can learn. We need to give our children a chance to be creative, to have some meaningful arts experiences. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted by Dr. Jeffrey Spector

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